



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF **ENERGY**

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Tuesday, September 29, 2009

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Brothers' Company "Back in Black" Thanks to Recovery Act

Beech Island, SC, (Sept.25) – Last year was a bad year for Larry and Kevin Peters of Peters Machine and Welding in Beech Island, S.C. They had to borrow money to stay afloat, and were hoping that someone or some company would need their particular machining abilities soon. Towards the end of the year, business was picking up, and then a tornado hit the shop and removed 90 percent of the shingles and ripped the façade from the building, tossing bricks deep into the shop itself.

Wonderfully, the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) was passed in April of this year, and the work orders came rolling in. The ARRA funds that were distributed to the Savannah River Site (SRS) are going, wherever possible, to local companies in S.C. and Ga. As a result of the ARRA funds, SRS has found a need for the Peters brothers' tools, which are essentially extension rods with gripping capabilities, which are adaptable to a variety of tasks. Gerald L. Peters, Larry and Kevin's father, designed and patented the first of these "grippers" and began the company.

The Recovery Act funding saved one small local business and two jobs – the Peters brothers not only own the business, they are the only employees.

The aluminum grippers are designed to hold hazardous materials, and can be machined to be as short as a foot and a half, or as long as 30 feet. "The longest order we had was for one that was 100 feet long," Larry said. "They ordered it to retrieve a tool that someone had dropped into a culvert." Kevin said, "We designed it to be 10 sections that were 10 feet long. They were joined by a dovetail joint and nut and bolt assembly."

The grippers can be used either in the glovebox assemblies for handling small objects, even something as small and thin as a dime, or large enough for handling cinder blocks.

The brothers are also rebuilding the company after the tornado damage. They were insured, but the ARRA funds will allow them to make some upgrades to the building, such as redoing the façade, adding more security measures and adding a better roof to the building itself.

Since 1962, Peters Machine and Welding has provided specialized machined parts and assemblies for the SRS, as well as other Department of Energy sites, such as Hanford and Oak Ridge. They also provide similarly designed and engineered parts for commercial nuclear facilities. “We have been supplying our own product since my father started the company 47 years ago,” Larry said. His brother Kevin adds, “With this work order from SRS, we are able to keep our doors open, as well as put ourselves back into the black.”

For additional information on the Department of Energy’s Office of Environmental Management and the Savannah River Site, can be found at <http://www.em.doe.gov> or <http://www.srs.gov>. For more information about the SRS Recovery Act Project, please visit www.srs.gov/recovery.

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SR-2009-23



Photo Caption: Larry (left) and Kevin (right) Peters are carrying on their father's work in the development of their "grippers" for SRS, as well as other DOE and commercial sites.